

WE CLAIM:

1. A marker for marking a cavity site within the body of a mammalian patient from which a tissue sample has been removed, said marker formed at least in part of a clearance delaying component, and being characterized by remaining present at the cavity site in sufficient quantity to permit detection and location of the cavity site for at least a predetermined first time period after introduction to the cavity site.

2. An intracorporeal marker for marking a cavity site within the body of a mammalian patient from which a tissue sample has been removed, comprising a mass of material that is detectable by at least two remote imaging detection methods when introduced into the cavity site from which tissue has been removed, that remains detectable at the cavity site for at least a predetermined first time period after its introduction into the cavity site and that does not interfere with imaging of tissue adjacent the cavity site during a predetermined second period of time after the first period of time.

3. The marker of claim 2 wherein the detectable mass is imageable, and remains imageable for at least the first predetermined time period but clears sufficiently from the site so as to not interfere with imaging of tissue adjacent the site during the second predetermined time period.

4. The marker of claim 3 wherein the detectable mass is imageable by at least one of the methods selected from the group consisting of X-ray, fluoroscopy, mammography, magnetic resonance imaging, ultrasound, Doppler, radiation detector, and combinations thereof.

5. The marker of claim 2 wherein the detectable mass is detectable by palpation.
6. The marker of claim 2 wherein the detectable mass is visually detectable.
7. The marker of claim 7 wherein the detectable mass includes a colored substance selected from the group consisting of a dye, a colorant, colorant particles, and possible combinations thereof.
8. The marker of claim 2 wherein the detectable mass is detectable by at least two remote imaging detection methods selected from the group consisting of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), ultrasound imaging, Doppler imaging, x-ray imaging, mammography, fluoroscopy, other roentgenological imaging methods, and visualization.
9. The marker of claim 2 wherein the detectable mass will interfere with imaging of tissue adjacent to the site and will remain at the site in sufficient quantity to permit location of the site by imaging through the first period of time and will clear sufficiently from the site so as to not interfere with imaging of tissue adjacent the site during the second period of time.
10. The marker of claim 2 wherein the detectable mass of material is of sufficient quantity that, if introduced into the cavity site alone, would clear from the cavity site and be not detectable within about one month after introduction and includes a clearance delaying component that delays the clearance of said material from the cavity site such that (i) a detectable

quantity of said material remains present at the cavity site until at least said first time point and  
(ii) said material clears sufficiently from the cavity site to permit imaging of tissue adjacent to  
the cavity site without interference from said detectable marker at said second time point.

11. The marker of claim 11 wherein the clearance delaying element is selected from  
the group consisting of polylactic acid, polyglycolic acid, an encapsulating material, collagen,  
and the possible combinations thereof.

12. The marker of claim 10 wherein the detectable mass of material is detectable by  
radiographic imaging.

13. The marker of claim 10 wherein the detectable mass of material comprises at least  
one sponge.

14. The marker of claim 10 wherein the detectable mass comprises a collagenous  
material having radiographically imageable matter attached thereto.

15. A marker for marking a cavity site within the body of a mammalian patient from  
which a tissue sample has been removed, said marker comprising collagen, and being  
characterized by remaining present at the cavity site in sufficient quantity to permit detection and  
location of the cavity site for at least a predetermined first time period after introduction to the  
cavity site.

16. The marker of claim 15 wherein the marker is imageable by at least one of the methods selected from the group consisting of X-ray, fluoroscopy, mammography, magnetic resonance imaging, ultrasound, Doppler, radiation detector, and combinations thereof.
17. The marker of claim 15 wherein the marker is detectable by palpation.
18. The marker of claim 15 wherein the marker is visually detectable.
19. The marker of claim 18 wherein the marker includes a colored substance selected from the group consisting of a dye, a colorant, colorant particles, and possible combinations thereof.
20. The marker of claim 15 wherein the marker is detectable by at least two remote imaging detection methods selected from the group consisting of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), ultrasound imaging, Doppler imaging, x-ray imaging, mammography, fluoroscopy, other roentgenological imaging methods, and visualization.
21. The marker of claim 15 wherein the marker is detectable by radiographic imaging.
22. The marker of claim 15 wherein the marker comprises at least one sponge.

23. The marker of claim 15 wherein the marker further comprises a radiographically imageable matter attached to the collagen.

24. A marker for marking a cavity site within the body of a mammalian patient from which a tissue sample has been removed, said marker comprising bioabsorbable material, and being characterized by remaining present at the cavity site in sufficient quantity to permit detection and location of the cavity site for at least a predetermined first time period after introduction to the cavity site.

25. The marker of claim 24 wherein the marker is imageable by at least one of the methods selected from the group consisting of X-ray, fluoroscopy, mammography, magnetic resonance imaging, ultrasound, Doppler, radiation detector, and combinations thereof.

26. The marker of claim 24 wherein the marker is detectable by palpation.

27. The marker of claim 24 wherein the marker is visually detectable.

28. The marker of claim 27 wherein the marker includes a colored substance selected from the group consisting of a dye, a colorant, colorant particles, and possible combinations thereof.

29. The marker of claim 24 wherein the marker is detectable by at least two remote imaging detection methods selected from the group consisting of magnetic resonance imaging

(MRI), ultrasound imaging, Doppler imaging, x-ray imaging, mammography, fluoroscopy, other roentgenological imaging methods, and visualization.

30. The marker of claim 24 wherein the marker is detectable by radiographic imaging.

31. The marker of claim 24 wherein the marker comprises at least one sponge.

32. The marker of claim 24 wherein the marker comprises collagenous material having a radiographically imageable matter attached to the collagen.